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## **Social Marketing: application and advantage in continuous medical education**

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**Background:** The aim of continuous medical education is to improve physicians' performance. Unfortunately, most of the efforts which have been done in recent years for achieving this goal have been ineffective. Using ineffective educational methods and techniques are probably the major cause of this deficiency.

Consumer-based models such as social marketing model can be used efficiently in the field of medical education. Social marketing is "the use of commercial marketing concepts and tools in programs designed to influence individual's behavior to improve their well being and that of the society". In this paper the main concepts and principles of social marketing model have been explained. Consumer analysis, market analysis, and channel analysis are the main concepts of social marketing that can be used in the field of continuous medical education.

**Conclusion:** Although planning educational programs based on the mentioned principles seems to impose more expenses, it increases the probability of success and can affect physicians' behavior more than other applied programs.

**Key words:** Continuous Medical Education, Social Marketing, Behavior Change, Consumer, Market

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